

A MEADOWLANDS RENAISSANCE



2004/2005 ANNUAL REPORT



New Jersey Meadowlands Commission





I'm proud to see the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission accomplishing so much over the last year. They are an example of good government and share my ambition to improve the quality of life of New Jersey's residents. Along with promoting redevelopment and preserving some of the last open spaces in our urban Northeast, they are finding other ways to improve the communities they touch. They are developing new ways to teach students with disabilities about the environment, they are using videoconferencing technology to share nature's wisdom with seniors, and they are generally pursuing a broad range of innovative initiatives across the spectrum. It's no wonder the Meadowlands is experiencing a renaissance, and with public servants like these, it's no wonder our entire state is as well.

- Acting Governor Richard J. Codey



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A great egret.

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Message from the Chair



Somewhere between Eden and the asphalt jungle is the Meadowlands. It is a place of contrasts, the Empire State Building looming over fields of reeds, the 24-hour rumble of the New Jersey Turnpike next to the rustle of migrating birds.

There was a time when these contrasts weren't so picturesque. The Meadowlands was literally a dump and full turnaround didn't seem in reach. Today that has changed. In January 2004, my fellow New Jersey Meadowlands Commissioners and I approved a new Master Plan achieving a synthesis between redevelopment and environmental restoration. This past year we've built on that solid foundation.

We've launched a full restoration of the endangered Kearny Marsh complex. The Secaucus High School Marsh is targeted for rehabilitation. Mill Creek Point Park is open. Redevelopment is advancing in 10 zones. We're working on a grassroots flood management plan. A unified tourism bureau and eco-tourism program is taking off. Our towns received \$3.5 million over the course of 2004 and 2005 for a better quality of life and taxpayer relief. We're working on a new Meadowlands Science Center and Observatory.

After decades of turmoil and wallowing in the mistakes of the past, the Meadowlands is taking its rightful place as a symbol of regeneration and balance. Our residents deserve as much, and we plan to continue delivering on the promise of a better future.

Susan Bass Zeven

Message from the Executive Director



Some of us had hoped that the dramatic push and work-hours of 2003, which had resulted in the award-winning New Jersey Meadowlands Commission Master Plan, would leave us with time to recoup and pursue a slower pace as the plan naturally worked its magic.

However, when the plan was approved by our Board of Commissioners, we realized that what we had achieved was only a beginning and that a very difficult, but ultimately rewarding, set of tasks lay before us.

It has indeed been an intense but good year, and speaking for the staff of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, we are grateful for a Chairwoman and Board of Commissioners who push for great things and support this agency when the going gets tough. No renaissance can occur without courage and foresight, and we are proud that those virtues are so well embodied in our Board and their Chairwoman.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert R. Celmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "R" and "C".